

SR 169 Corridor Study

Corridor Working Group Partner Chartering Session

Meeting Summary

Meeting date: September 27, 2004

Location: Kent Maintenance Center (26620 68th Ave South * Kent, WA 98032)

Attendees: ***Partners in attendance:***

Chris Searcy – City of Enumclaw
Dave Zielinski – City of Maple Valley
Nick Afzali – City of Renton
Ann Martin – King County
Allison Dobbins – Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)
Ron Paananen – Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Olympic Region
Seth Stark – WSDOT, Urban Planning Office

Partners not in attendance:

Jason Paulsen – City of Black Diamond

Others in attendance:

Pat Gelb – Parsons Transportation Group
Diane Adams, Lynn Lefkoff, Kristine dos Remedios – EnviroIssues
Barbara Briggs, Michael Cummings, Jim Eastman, Kamuron Gurol,
Renee Zimmerman – WSDOT

**Welcome and
Introductions**

Mike Cummings, WSDOT, welcomed the partners and thanked them for taking the time to attend the chartering session. Attendees introduced themselves and shared the name of the organization or jurisdiction they were representing for the SR 169 Corridor Study effort. Diane Adams went over the contents of the packet handed out to each partner in attendance and the agenda for the morning's meeting.

Mike introduced Seth Stark, the new SR 169 Corridor Study Project Manager. He will be the WSDOT point person for this project (starks@wsdot.wa.gov 206-464-1288). Mike also introduced the other new member of WSDOT, Kamuron Gurol, Urban Planning Corridor Study Manager. Kamuron is overseeing three other studies in Puget Sound for WSDOT.

**About the
Study**

Mike Cummings gave a brief background on the SR 169 Corridor Study effort, including information on the project's budget and schedule. The budget overall is \$813,000, which consists of previously approved legislative funds, local matching, and STP funding sources. The project has an 18-month schedule, but WSDOT and the consultant team intend to complete the SR 169 Route Development Plan in 12 months in order to be as efficient as possible with the available funds. The SR 169 and SR 164 corridor studies are being conducted on the same schedule and the two corridors will be modeled together.

Mike explained that two products resulting from the corridor study would include a short-term project list and a long-term project list. The short-term list will include projects that address immediate needs along the corridor and include projects that may have already been identified and agreed to by corridor jurisdictions. State congressional legislative

representatives have requested that the short-term list be available before the new legislative session starts; Mike would like it before the end of the year. The long-term list of projects will be developed to address future needs along the corridor over the next 20-25 years.

Ideally, the recommendations from the study will be consensus-based, as projects with consensus are more likely to move forward through scoping, budgeting and implementation. The strategy in the short-term is to review and prioritize projects already identified by project partners. For example, safety improvements could be identified for high accident locations.

Several partners asked how other stakeholders, such as school districts and public safety agencies, would be involved in decision-making. WSDOT is continuing to interview those interests identified by the partners and welcomes further suggestions if other issues/stakeholders come up.

Project Charter

Diane Adams and Lynn Lefkoff, EnviroIssues, reviewed the project charter to address any concerns with the language and to make sure all of the important content was included. Diane also shared comments from Jason Paulsen, Black Diamond, whose ideas had already been integrated into the draft charter.

Project Vision

The partners' definition of safety along the corridor was discussed, along with specific concerns for each of the jurisdictions. Lack of safe pedestrian crossings is a concern, particularly at schools and larger intersections like the junction of SR 164 and SR 169 in Enumclaw. High speeds and access issues, in combination with increased congestion, also present safety concerns. All of the partners agreed that safety is inclusive of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety. Creating opportunities along the corridor to accommodate all modes of transportation will be important to the project's success.

The group also agreed that delay should be specified in the charter as vehicle and person delay, to include motorists, transit users, freight traffic, bicyclists, and pedestrians and ensure that "reducing delay" does not necessarily mean widening roads through rural areas. (There is concern that expansion projects might be seen as growth inducing.) Though delay is not a problem everywhere on the corridor, partners agreed it should be considered a corridor-wide issue.

Instead of committing to "meet the demands of growth," the partners agreed the charter should commit them to "respond to the demands of growth."

Project Goals

The partners agreed "environmentally sound" and "permissible" were redundant. A statement was added to the goals referring back to the Project Vision. The group felt it was more realistic for the immediate-term projects to be "funded and/or implemented" in the next 6-18 months instead of stating only that they will be "implemented." Partners emphasized it is important that the public sees outcomes of the project "on the ground." In order to more closely match the demand-forecasting schedule from PSRC, the partners revised the time frame for the long-term recommendations from 20 to 20-25 years.

Project Outcomes

Consistency with local and regional comprehensive plans was expressed as important to include in the charter. Confusing terms were revised and clarifying questions were asked about what the different outcomes encompassed, to ensure transit capital facilities such as Park and Ride lots were included.

After further discussion on the content, the partners agreed that the project outcomes should be simplified overall in the final charter and it was important to indicate that the final product of

the study was a Route Development Plan for SR 169.

Operating Guidelines

The partners agreed to actively participate in the study, be patient and flexible when requesting information, and give each other adequate notice of arising issues so each partner can gather the necessary information to deal with those issues. Future meetings should be held along the corridor and a potential next meeting location is the Lake Wilderness Lodge in Maple Valley. It is also important for the partners to think of the bigger goals for the corridor as a whole instead of only thinking project- or jurisdiction-specific.

Roles and Responsibilities

It was confirmed that WSDOT and the consultant team will handle all meeting logistics and the partners will be responsible for actively participating in future meetings. Partners agreed to be aware of their community's sentiment about any technical issues that arise during the study process.

Decision Making

The partners discussed the types of approval necessary for the decisions that will have to be made throughout the course of the study and how long such an approval will take. Many of the partners wanted to check on these requirements and report back to the group at the next session. In general, any commitment of funds will have to be reviewed by each partner's council, executive and/or planning body, and approvals could take up to 6-8 weeks. Should any action need to be included in local or regional plans, reviewing approval could take much longer, due to plan review cycles. Other types of decisions could likely be handled by the Corridor Study partners, if they are given the opportunity to brief officials on the project's progress. The partners were encouraged to keep their own councils, executives, and electeds informed on a regular basis and WSDOT agreed to meet with each jurisdiction as well and provide briefing materials when necessary. As recommendations are developed, they can be discussed at meetings and acted upon at subsequent meetings, after the partners have a chance to brief their officials.

The definition of consensus was also discussed. It was agreed that no action would be taken if a partner with a stake in the action cannot live with the outcome of that action. If a partner does not have a stake in the action but is dissenting, the dissent will be reflected in the recommendations for the implementation of that action.

Communication

A project website will be maintained by WSDOT for the project. Everyone in the group committed to send relevant emails to all of the partners involved and to keep track of who contacts them about the project and what questions they ask.

The Corridor Working Group (CWG), consisting of the partners at this meeting, will meet a maximum of six times over the 12-month project schedule (but only when it is necessary) to review progress and discuss. At least one partner from each organization and jurisdiction will be present at these meetings and designated alternates are acceptable and encouraged if a regular partner cannot attend. The CWG will be kept as small as possible in order to be effective. It will be the partner's responsibility to consult with the appropriate decision makers and/or stakeholders in order to provide local thoughts and concerns at these meetings. If necessary, additional stakeholders may be invited to CWG meetings if their attendance is relevant to the issues being discussed. As noted above, WSDOT will continue to reach out to other stakeholders to ensure their concerns are included in the study. Public open houses along the corridor are planned for early 2005, when an initial list of alternatives is ready, and again before the end of the study.

Conflict Resolution

There were no questions or concerns about the conflict resolution section of the draft charter.

Authority

The point of contact for each organization and jurisdiction was established as follows:

- Chris Searcy, City of Enumclaw
- Jason Paulsen, City of Black Diamond
- Dave Zielinski, City of Maple Valley
- Nick Afzali, City of Renton
- Ann Martin, King County
- Allison Dobbins, Puget Sound Regional Council
- Seth Stark, WSDOT

The signatory responsibility and constraints sections were removed from the charter.

EnviroIssues staff agreed to make revisions to the charter and send out the final version to the partners via email. The partners agreed to sign the charter together at the first CWG meeting.

Closing and Next Steps

The first CWG meeting will likely be held in the first two weeks of November. At the first CWG meeting, the partners will sign the charter, a preliminary short-term project list will be compiled, and the initial screening of potential projects will be discussed.

Action Items:

- Partners are to send their project lists to Seth Stark at WSDOT (starks@wsdot.wa.gov 206-464-1288) as soon as possible (by mid-October at the latest).
- WSDOT will compile the short-term project list for the first CWG meeting.
- EnviroIssues will revise the charter per the partner's comments, email the final version to the partners and bring a copy to the first CWG meeting for the partners to sign.
- EnviroIssues will write a meeting summary for the Chartering Session and send it out to the partners.

Upcoming Meetings

- CWG Meeting: Beginning of November (date TBA)

Handouts

- Chartering Session Agenda
- Study Area Map
- Draft SR 169 Charter
- SR 169 Study Schedule
- Route Development Process Flowchart
- SR 169 Issues Previously Identified by Partners
- WSDOT Kick-off Meeting Summaries
- Route Development Plan Checklist
- Example Route Development Plan: SR 532 Route Development Plan